



## News Release

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests &  
Thunder Basin National Grassland  
<http://fs.usda.gov/mbf>

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### **Squirrel Creek Fire Makes Sunday Run, Now Over 7,000 Acres**

**(LARAMIE, Wyo.) July 2, 2012** – Windy and dry conditions pushed the Squirrel Creek Fire in multiple directions on Sunday, forcing evacuations and rapidly growing the blaze to over 7,000 acres in size. Fire activity on the Medicine Bow National Forest, Laramie Ranger District, calmed down on Monday morning, but could pick up later in the day.

The fire, in south Albany County, has burned down to Highway 230 on the south, has crossed Fox Creek Road and has established itself on Sheep Mountain on the east. Highway 230 and Fox Creek Road are both closed.

The Albany County Sheriff's Office has issued evacuation notices for all residents along the Fox Creek Road and from Jelms Mountain on the south, north along Sheep Mountain and all the way to Highway 130. This includes the west side of Highway 230, the community of Woods Landing and Jelms, as well as Sheep Mountain, up to Lake Hattie. Pre-evacuation notices remain in effect for residents of Fox Park and Albany.

An evacuation center for affected landowners and residents has been established by the Red Cross at the Albany County Fairgrounds. Animals can also be accommodated at that location if necessary.

Crews worked late into the night on Sunday to protect structures and complete burnout operations in order to remove unburned fuels. Air resources also worked to slow the fire's growth over the weekend. Fire personnel assisted the Sheriff's Department in evacuating residents and the public from the Fox Creek Road area.

Firefighter and public safety is first and foremost on Monday's objectives, as will be continued structure protection, keeping the fire north of Highway 230 and trying avoid the spread of fire southeast onto Jelms Mountain.

The fire started in the Squirrel Creek drainage approximately two miles south/southeast of Lake Owen and three to four miles west/northwest of Woods Landing, Wyo.

It was discovered Saturday afternoon around 1 p.m. and is actively burning a wide variety of fuels, including beetle-killed timber.

Currently there are several engines, a Type II Initial Attack crew and air resources assisting with the fire. Additional crews and air resources have been requested.

A Type 3 Incident Management Team is currently managing the fire and a National Incident Management Team will take over the fire on Tuesday morning as a Type II incident.

Weather forecasts in the area are calling for continued hot and dry conditions throughout the week with spotty thunderstorms possible early in the week.

The cause of the fire which has been burning since Saturday afternoon is under investigation.

Recreationists planning to spend time on the Medicine Bow National Forest over the Fourth of July holiday are asked to avoid the fire area. Please respect road closures and do not try to get close to the fire for viewing purposes.

As information becomes available, updates will be provided by Public Affairs staff from the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests and Thunder Basin National Grassland on Twitter at: **@MBRNFsTBNG**, hashtag **#SquirrelCreekFire** and at InciWeb, **<http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/2970/>**.

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